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ing the course I have found it an advantage to make definite assignments, day by day, in a text, and—say once a week—devote part of one period to a discussion. A text is also of great advantage in helping the student familiarize himself with the new names which he continually meets in the course, and it is also a great help in supplying the connecting links, and additional facts which the lecturer often cannot supply in giving a rapid survey. Aside from the definite text other readings may be assigned, to which the student may be referred for special topics and reports. Map making, or filling in outline maps may also be of great advantage, especially in studying the geography, both physical and commercial.

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THE COLLEGE COURSE IN HISPANIC AMERICAN HISTORY

The general college course in Hispanic American history should be primarily and impartially informational. It should be so planned and developed as to give the student a knowledge of his neighbors to the South which will enable him to understand the problems now facing them, and to grasp the psychology of the Hispanic Americans. Such a study offers to students in the United States an unusually good opportunity for the development of an historical point of view. In fact, historical-mindedness and a sound understanding of the present conditions in Hispanic America and of their historical antecedents are inseparable. In this discussion, such mental impartiality must be assumed on the part of the teacher; and it is to be hoped that it usually exists. But the chances are about nine to ten that the student—if he possesses any ideas about Hispanic America at all—will come to the class with a prejudiced and patronizing attitude towards the peoples to be studied. For are not we Anglo-Americans, of all the civilized nations, most narrow and most intolerant of the “otherness of others”?

Since prejudice can be eliminated only by supplanting it by understanding—through getting at causes—it seems desirable to make dominant in the course the constitutional thread; for the most conspicuous fault of the states that have risen from the ashes of the colonial empires of Spain and Portugal is the instability of their governments; and this political backwardness, because not understood, excites contempt for the struggling nations to the South, and disbelief in their capacity for self-government.

Any course designed to make clear the historical evolution of these states and to explain present conditions there must be sufficiently broad in scope to include a study of (1) the European background, (2) the Hispanic colonial system, (3) the geography of Hispanic America, and (4) the aborigines and their pre-Columbian culture. The chief points to be emphasized in the first are the institutions of the motherlands, the aims of the conquerors and colonists, and their mental characteristics—such as excessive pride, religious zeal and intolerance, and love for warfare, all of which are to be accounted for by the history of the Iberian Peninsula.

The Hispanic colonial system—political, economic, and religious—was the result of Old World institutions adapted to New World conditions. These basic institutions understood, it is very easy to make clear the *machinery* of colonial government—local and central—to indicate the important part played by the Church, and to show how the mother countries operated to exploit the colonies economically through monopolistic principles and restrictive laws. But in order really to *understand* the colonial period, the student must be familiar with New World geography and must have some knowledge of the aborigines, for whom the colonial system was largely devised.

The ignorance of geography characteristic of the average young American constantly surprises the teacher prone to worship the God of Things as they Ought to Be; but, until geography is really *learned* in the grades, the practical teacher will see to it that his class is equipped at the start with adequate knowledge of the lands to be studied. This is particularly necessary for Hispanic America, regarding the geography of which ignorance is marvelously dense.

Information regarding the number and distribution of the aborigines and their cultural characteristics at the time of the European conquest is perhaps even more important than the facts of New World geography; without such knowledge it is impossible to understand the industrial and political systems of the colonial period; and much less, the condition of religion and morals. A brief survey of the culture of the Aztecs, Maya-Quiches and Incas, with their various striking parallels to European institutions, seems especially essential in this connection. Further reasons for attention to aboriginal culture history are the light thrown by it upon the capacity of the aborigines for advancement, and the high character of the culture itself, which caused artists and designers in the United States to turn to it for inspiration after the opening of the World War. To the woman student, at least, there is no more fascinating

chapter in Hispanic American history than that dealing with aboriginal history.

If possessed of a clear understanding of the colonial period, the student will easily comprehend the problems which faced the young nations which rose to the South a century ago, and can follow with sympathetic intelligence the conflicts over political questions by which they were torn, and the struggle of the states towards stable government. They can also appreciate the achievements of the Hispanic Americans along various lines of development, with a survey of which the course may well end.

As outlined, the course can obviously be more satisfactorily presented if a year is allowed for it than if it must be limited to one semester; but, through omission of non-essentials, avoidance of repetition, and intelligent grouping of topics, much may be accomplished with a class meeting two or three hours a week for but a half year. For instance, the European conquest need be sketched in only the broadest outline; and it is useless even to attempt to enumerate the almost endless revolutions and civil wars characterizing the national period. Only those struggles which left their individual impress upon Hispanic American history are worth individual consideration. But the principles for which the contestants battled, where any are apparent, should never be overlooked. It would seem a poor expenditure of time also, even in a year course, to treat separately the careers of each of the twenty Hispanic American states. Those of minor importance would better be grouped and considered collectively, as far as their history and development run parallel, attention being given to separate states only in the case of that which especially characterizes them. Such an arrangement will secure more time for the republics whose recent progress has gained for them a new place among the nations.

Until good text and reference books are more numerous, courses in Hispanic American history must be based largely upon outlines made by the teachers themselves; but some of the available histories—particularly those dealing with Spain in the Old World and the Hispanic colonial period in the Americas—are of such excellent quality that students may with profit be given definite assignments in them. Since the works bearing upon the national period of the lands to the South are, on the whole, much less satisfactory, it seems necessary to cover at least the political phase of this part of the course by the lecture and quiz method, having the students supplement the classroom work by reference reading carefully selected by the teacher.

The only way to be sure that the members of a class have the geographic knowledge necessary to the understanding of a course is to test them—after giving them an opportunity to acquire it—by means of definite questions and by maps drawn in class entirely from memory. The preparation of maps at home may be excellent as an exercise in manual training, but it has very little additional value. Only by requiring the student to place the desired data upon an outline drawn from memory can the teacher be sure of the necessary geographic background. Such exercises may include maps of various types, among them those showing (1) physical features, (2) the distribution of the most important aboriginal groups, (3) the races and nationalities forming the present population of Hispanic America, (4) natural resources, leading products, transportation facilities, and the like, (5) political divisions, such as the colonial administrative units, later political groupings, and the present Hispanic American states and their capitals.

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